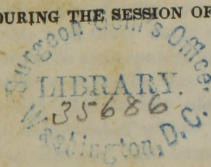


AN EXAMINATION
OF CERTAIN
CHARGES PREFERRED AGAINST
THE MEDICAL CLASS
OF THE

University of Pennsylvania,

DURING THE SESSION OF 1834-35.



[Phila]
[1835]

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DURING THE REIGN OF 1842

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“ Nil falsi audeat, nil veri non audeat dicere.”—Cic.

It is our happiness to live in an age when truth is the great object of pursuit with civilized mankind. The genius of liberal opinion, which, a few centuries since, was crippled by prejudice, and opposed by ignorance, is now traversing the nations of Europe and our own country with rapidity, shedding an almost dazzling light upon every department of science and of art, and while it adds new conquests to the empire of mind, subdues our ruder feelings to the influence of the heart. The arrogance of pedantry can no longer impose the sophisms of subtilty for the demonstrations of reality; every assertion is examined, every argument weighed, every conclusion traced; justice awards the palm where partiality once conferred it, and voluntary falsehood is compelled to seek refuge in obscurity from the retribution of an indignant public. No subject, in the discussion, or decision of which, essential principles, or the vital interests of any branch of knowledge are concerned, can pass, without exciting interest, before the eyes of the community, and least of all is indifference shown when that sacred principle of honor, the firmest safeguard of all we value, is called in question, or impugned. If then a case may be produced, in which not only that principle is involved, but in which assaults are directed against the partialities of a body of men, proverbially sensitive in all that regards their privileges, their pursuits, and their early attachments,—from them at least a candid hearing may be anticipated, if not from the world. Such a case we esteem the present one to be, one in which a charge of dark dishonor has been preferred against the oldest medical school on this side the Atlantic, in the disproof of which, not only the present students in her halls have a deep interest, but every physician throughout the land, who has won his laurels in the race for which her skill equipped him. It is a case too which concerns every parent who looks forward to the day when his son shall become an honor to the science of medicine, which concerns every citizen who has at heart the culture of intellect, and the highest good of his country.

And now, it will be asked, what wrongs have been suffered by the students of the University to elicit language such as this? In a public print of this city, known by the name of ‘The Pennsylvanian,’ on the 21st Feb. 1835, there appeared an article signed ‘a Physician,’ purporting to be a correct account of certain occurrences leading to the removal of *Dr. John Redman Coxe*, from the chair of *Materia Medica*

and Pharmacy. This publication containing divers charges against the students of the University, and also against the colleagues of the above named Professor, was by him issued a few days subsequently in pamphlet form, with a distinct voucher annexed, declaring its statements to be 'substantially correct.' Here the undersigned cannot conceal their regret that Dr. Coxe should ever have lent his name to a document, which upon the most cursory examination he must have perceived to be far from 'substantially correct.' The only explanation which occurs to them is, that Dr. Coxe was grossly misinformed concerning the events of the session, for they would revolt from imputing to him the least intention of wilful misrepresentation. The statements of the paper just alluded to, produced upon the Medical Class very diversified effects; in some it excited ridicule, anger in others, and surprise in all who were aware of the circumstances that had actually occurred. Under a feeling of indignation at the traducer of their characters, the Class met, on the afternoon of the 21st, and delegated a committee to demand from the proprietors of the *Pennsylvanian*, the author of the obnoxious article. An editorial article having appeared simultaneously with that of 'a Physician,' stating that the author assumed all responsibility himself, no difficulty in his recognizance could reasonably have been anticipated. How unfounded was this expectation the following correspondence will show.

Philadelphia Feb. 21st, 1835.

To the Editors of the *Pennsylvanian*.

Sirs: In your paper of this morning, there appeared an article headed "University of Pennsylvania," and subscribed "A Physician." We, the undersigned, a Committee appointed for the purpose, by the Medical Class of that University, request of you the name of the individual, upon whose authority it was published.

J. M. WALLACE.

ALFRED STILLE.

HEBER CHASE.

ROBT. MORRIS.

C. F. B. GUILLOU.

The following was enclosed in a note, from the Editors to the Committee, in reply to the foregoing.

Phil. Feb. 21, 1835.

Dear Sir:—

Your note enclosing a communication from a Committee of the Students of the University, I have this moment received.

In writing an account of the transactions which have occurred in the University this Session, I was solely influenced by a desire to do justice to a very respectable gentleman, by making the public acquainted with the facts of his case, which had been misrepresented by his enemies. I have taken especial care to state nothing but the truth: if the young gentlemen who have asked for my name can disprove my statements let them do so.

The public, until this morning, have only heard *ex parte* statements

from the parties opposed to Dr. Coxe, it is now full time they should hear the other side.

Dr. Coxe is himself engaged in preparing for the press a full history of his connection with the University ; the facts of which will be authenticated by documents that cannot be refuted. When this work is published, and all the facts of Dr. Coxe's case made known to the public, I shall then cheerfully give up my name to any person who may feel desirous to be made acquainted with it.

Yours, respectfully,

MR. B. MIFFLIN.

A PHYSICIAN.

Foiled in their object, the class, still unwilling that the subject should elude their just displeasure, on Monday, February 23rd, gave into the hands of a select committee the duty of reporting some definite plan of action. On the following Wednesday, a plan was laid before them, and unanimously approved. It is expressed in the succeeding preamble and resolutions.

"Whereas, a communication has appeared in the *Pennsylvanian* of the 21st February, 1835, purporting to be a true account of the occurrences which led to the removal of Dr. John Redman Coxe, from the chair of *Materia Medica*, and whereas this communication contains several assertions which we do positively know to be false, and several others which we have good reason to believe to be equally untrue ; and whereas, the author of the communication alluded to, by refusing to give up his name to the committee of our fellow students named for the purpose of obtaining it, without his assigning any reason for his refusal, has evinced a consciousness of his having slandered us in advancing statements, which as a man he dares not support, and cannot substantiate ; and furthermore, considering it due to this University, our ' *Alma Mater*,' to correct any such false statements and representations as may tend to injure its fair name and high standing in the opinion of those, who from circumstances of whatever kind, might be induced to give credence to the communication above alluded to, or to others of a similar nature ; therefore, be it

Resolved, 1st. "That the statement alluded to, as a "true account" of the occurrences which led to the removal of Dr. Coxe, and since its publication vouched for as correct by the Ex-Professor himself, is not a "correct narrative" by "an impartial historian," but that it is an unfair statement of the occurrences, fraught with falsehoods, and by its whole tenor calculated to distort and misrepresent our actions during this session, and our relations to the Faculty of this University.

2nd. "That contempt is the only feeling which this class can entertain for the "individual" who would, under the screen of incognizance, make assertions which he would not support with the sanction of his name, before that public to whom he appeals, and that class which he has slandered.

3rd. "That a committee of five be appointed to treat the article in the *Pennsylvanian* in such a manner, as they may think best to comport with the dignity of the class, and the probable importance of the communication alluded to.

4th. "That this committee be instructed to publish the above preamble and resolutions in our daily papers, and to adopt such measures as may be best calculated to give extensive circulation to this statement of our present opinions, and past actions.

5th. "That this committee be constituted a "standing committee" to answer, or otherwise treat all communications of a libellous or otherwise injurious character, tending to lower the high standing of this class in the estimation of the public."

In accordance with the third resolution the undersigned were constituted a standing committee, and their duty defined, viz: "to treat the article in the *Pennsylvanian* of 21st February, in such manner as they may think best to comport with the dignity of this class, and the probable importance of the communication alluded to."

To enter into a set review of the above named article, would answer but imperfectly the ends for which we were appointed. Falsehood must excite indignation in the honorable bosom; and hence to reply paragraph by paragraph would beget a heat of discussion, altogether unworthy the dignity of our constituents, and unbecoming the champions of justice. We stand the historians of truth, rather than the antagonists of error; we claim an elevation superior to that our assailant has chosen to occupy, and we pledge ourselves with the Roman inflexibility of him who uttered the sentence which heads this address, "to assert no falsehood, and suppress no truth." Every fact hereinafter mentioned we publish only on the authority of direct testimony, and that of a plurality of witnesses; every inference we believe to be fully warranted, but this we cheerfully submit to our impartial judges, claiming only for ourselves an equality of judgment with individuals, conversant as ourselves with the details of the case. In the article of 'a Physician,' much pains and ingenuity are exerted to implicate the Faculty of the University, as efficient causes, in the events of the past winter, as well as to excite suspicion of their anterior agency in the session of 1831-32. With the former of these only have we any direct concern, inasmuch as we deem our characters for independence involved by the artful hints, insinuations, and suppositions, resorted to as a basis, however frail, for the propositions of 'a Physician.' The undersigned conceive the best mode of establishing the validity of their cause, is to relate minutely and distinctly, but with all expedient brevity, the history of the transactions of this session, in chronological order, explaining the causes which led to them, and the consequences emanating from them, contrasting as they proceed, their own account, with the garbled, exaggerated, or unfounded narrative of the anonymous historian. Having thus established the authority on which they act, and sketched the principles which shall guide them in the discussion, the committee at once proceed to their more immediate duty.

The first occurrence, which has a connexion with the chain we are now about to examine, will be found as far back as the delivering of the introductory lecture to the course of *Materia Medica* and *Pharmacy*, early in the month of November last. Several times during the progress of the lecture, the speaker was interrupted by sounds, which though usually employed to express approbation, were in this case,

owing to the manner and occasion of their exhibition, very unequivocally of an opposite meaning. They were made upon a frequent repetition of the name of an ancient father of medical science, and of quotations from the language in which he wrote. The interruption here noticed, proceeded, however, from a *very* few individuals, and upon its being repeated was each time met by the general and hearty disapprobation of the class; not that the body of the class conceived the lecture of the professor either entertaining or useful, but that they were indignant, that any one holding so distinguished a station should be the subject of undisguised and wanton insult. Yet the whole scene was but a rehearsal of that occurring at the introductory of the same professor, in the fall of 1833. At that time he commenced a review of the works of Galen, (amounting in all, it is understood, to several hundred volumes,) and arrived in the course of this exercise to the third or fourth volume of his 'Simial Anatomy,' or, an Anatomy founded on the examination of monkeys. Throughout the whole lecture there was not a moment of respectful silence, but constant interruptions, similar to those related above, attended by a perpetual ingress and egress of persons to and from the room. The professor abruptly concluded his discourse, announcing his determination to prosecute it at some more convenient season. This it appears did not arrive till the commencement of the session just closed, at which time, the argument was resumed, to prove Galen and his cotemporaries well skilled in anatomy. If the whole class had manifested displeasure, at such a mode of occupying their time, we cannot but deem a palliation, if not excuse, would have been found in their inability to conceive the immediate or remote bearing of the discussion on the subject of *Materia Medica* and *Pharmacy*. Very many of them, mindful of the lecture of '33, chose, during the present one, to be absent, while those who did attend, whether first or second course students, we believe were impressed with but one opinion in regard to the value of the lecture they had listened to. We must repeat then, while we reprobate the act of those who annoyed the lecturer by their clamor or otherwise, that some palliation does exist in the circumstances of the case, although the agitators were in number very few, and received the prompt reprimand of the class.

On the whole, we infer from what has been stated, 1st. That as there was enough in the lectures of the professor to account for the disturbance which occurred, it is illogical to look beyond those lectures for the cause of the disturbance. 2nd. If it is granted that extraneous and improper influence *was* used to bring about the dissatisfaction at the introductory of the session just completed, by parity of reason, the same influences must be assigned as producing the dissatisfaction at the commencement of the session 1833-34; a conclusion which it is not pretended to support.

We are now come to consider the first general action of the class upon the subject which so deeply interested them. It was on Tuesday Dec. 2nd, 1834, that a student who is not a private pupil of any one of the professors, who has no personal acquaintance with any individual concerned in the government of the Institution, who, being actuated by his individual dissatisfaction with the lectures of Dr. Coxe, and a belief

that a similar sentiment pervaded the class, circulated during the anatomical lecture, (not placarded on the board,) two notices calling a meeting of the class, for that afternoon, relative to Dr. Coxe. One of these notices passed from his own hands; the other, given in charge to a friend, was circulated in an opposite and remote portion of the lecture room. In the afternoon, and during the hour of the eloquent lecturer on 'the Institutes,' another call similar to those just named was passed around the class, which, in consequence, with few exceptions, remained in the room after the lecture had been concluded. The gentleman, already alluded to in the opening of this paragraph, stated the object of the meeting, and supported his views by argument; he was followed by several, some of whom agreed with, some opposed his declarations, and by others again who dissented entirely from any aspect of the case hitherto presented. From such a chaos of opinions, it could not be expected that order should arise. Yet every speaker was prepared to admit that much useful time had been lost in attending the lectures of Dr. Coxe, while no two persons appeared to coincide in any plan of curing an admitted evil. In the face of these facts, it is asserted that a secret plot was devised and matured, and that this was the occasion of attempting to place it in effective operation. We have in our hands the testimony of a surgeon in the army of the U. S., a graduate of the University, of many years standing, and who occasionally attended the lectures during the past winter. If a candid statement could be expected from any one, surely such an one were he. He says, "I was accidentally present at the first meeting of the class held Dec. 2nd:" "Any person of common sense, who had been present at that meeting, would have perceived at once that there was no settled arrangement among the class, much less, that they were urged on by the other professors, as has been stated in a late publication; for had it been so, they would have come there prepared for some definite action, the plan would have been matured and carried at that meeting. The whole of this affair appeared to my mind to be the spontaneous burst of indignation at the manner in which so much of the session had been lost." In this fluctuating condition of things, the attempt to erect any project upon a solid basis, of necessity, proved entirely nugatory, and with the hope that order might yet direct their counsels, the class after appointing a committee to request from the Dean the use of the anatomical room for the next meeting, adjourned till the following morning.*

Here then was the first general action. The question naturally arises, how was it brought about? Those students who had during the preceding winter attended the lectures on *Materia Medica*, and many of whom had in the mean time reviewed that study, either by a summer

* It is proper to mention here, that there are two lecture rooms in the University, where class meetings have been held: the one occupied by the Professors of Anatomy, Surgery, and Obstetrics, having the seats rising one above another in the manner of the ancient amphitheatre and admirably adapted for seeing and hearing a speaker;—the other with a flat floor and a very slight perpendicular elevation, and totally unfit for deliberative meetings, except where every individual maintains his seat. The latter of these was the place of the meeting just described; and from a general desire for information upon the propositions before them, many of the students stood upon the backs of the benches, and one of these from being overloaded, gave way.

course of lectures, or by the various text books upon it which the brilliant discoveries of recent science have produced, found that in addition to the general aversion which they originally entertained for the lectures of Dr. Coxe, they could not avoid the conviction, that from that professor they had received much that time had rendered obsolete, much that judgment had pronounced valueless, and but little that the enlightened portion of the profession now esteemed essential both in principle and fact. They were impressed with the belief that none could instruct them in *Materia Medica*, but one whose daily study at the bedside of the sick, could test the action of the remedies employed, and thus corroborate or reject the testimony of others' experience. These qualifications were unfortunately not those of Dr. Coxe. Whether or not their judgment was correct they leave fearlessly to the decision of an intelligent community. That they should be compelled to give audience to instruction their reason could not approve, or that indeed a professor, so far in the rear of the march of science, should assume to lead those whose ambition and earnest desire was to be in the fore front of the expedition in search of truth, was not to be endured with entire resignation. There are situations where forbearance becomes a crime, and resistance to authority a virtue. As Americans, they had imbibed with their mother's milk a right to think for themselves, and to express their honest opinions without fear of punishment. They found that no change had taken place in the arrangement or the mode of teaching the *Materia Medica*; that days and weeks dragged slowly on with disquisitions on topics wholly and entirely irrelevant to the province of the lecturer. With such views, they had been less than human, had they remained silent. One with another lamented over their sad necessity; and replied to, without satisfying the constant queries of their younger fellow students, as to when the Professor would reach the subject-matter of his course. During the whole month of November the class was for the most part divided between inattention and levity: a portion forgetful of what they owed to the professor and to themselves, descended to the impropriety of hissing and other demonstrations of discontent. Several of considerable influence, contemplated making some effort to produce a change. Upon one of them, a physician of high standing in this city called, at the express request of two members of the faculty, to dissuade him and other members of the class from agitating the subject of Dr. Coxe's removal; the physician also declared on the authority of these members of the Faculty, *that they would consider a cessation of action in the matter, as a personal favor.** The motives that actuated the estimable Professors above alluded to, were, we doubt not, of the most upright nature; they must have been prompted by an earnest desire that the ensuing session should be marked by tranquillity and order. It was at this period of uneasiness that the first meeting of the class convened, without premeditation, consultation, or specific object; and therefore it dissolved, as it had assembled, unproductive of result. On the following morning, Wednesday 3rd, there being no lecture until 12 M. the class met in the hall and the grounds

* See note A. Appendix.

adjacent, and received the report of their committee. They had waited on the Dean of the Faculty, and requested the use of the Anatomical room. It was positively refused them. The class then adjourned to meet at 4½ o'clock P. M. when the above room would be at their disposal, without the necessity of demanding it, at which time the distinguished Professor of Obstetrics, having terminated his labours, the meeting of the class was organized. For a time, no plan seemed to be matured; but at length a verbal resolution was proposed, that the class absent themselves from the lectures of *Materia Medica*, for a limited period. The mover of this resolution had scarcely taken his seat, when another gentleman, entirely uninfluenced by any motives but those originating with himself, and unaware that the former had contemplated addressing the meeting, arose, and read the following resolutions, offering them as an amendment to that already proposed.

“Resolved, 1st. “That it is our deliberate *opinion*, that the lectures from the chair of *Materia Medica* in this University, are eminently deficient in practical information, and are unsuited to the present advanced state of medical science; and

2nd. “That for the foregoing reasons the present incumbent is unfitted for the station which he occupies.

3rd. “That in order to express to the said Professor our unfeigned sentiments, and also to induce the proper authorities to take some efficient measures for our own good, and the welfare of this Institution, we will absent ourselves from the lectures of the present incumbent, until some plan be adopted for the proper instruction of the students of this University, in *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy.”

In the discussion which followed, the grounds on which the resolutions were founded, none attempted to deny; a few only differed, as to *the mode* by which their object was to be attained. They inclined to milder measures, tending (as they believed) ultimately to the same end, and were anxious that the sentiments of the class should be respectfully communicated to the Professor, and thus opportunity be granted him of making the requisite alterations in his course, if he thought proper to do so. The large majority of the class, however, read in the events of 1831-32, a lesson upon this subject. They knew that a *petition* had gone before the Board of Trustees at that time, from the class, and that it had been unsuccessful; they believed, that the Professor had at the same time been personally appealed to, but with similar success; and it was to them, clear as demonstration, that if they would not waste time in fruitless trials, a course more decided and vigorous must be pursued. Such views, it is believed procured the adoption of the preceding resolutions, with apparent unanimity, in a *viva voce* vote. We have again and again examined these resolutions with attention and care; we have viewed them in every light in which they could be placed, but have been unable to perceive the refined course of reasoning by which ‘a Physician’ has drawn the conclusion that they are intended to express “the determination of the pupils that he (the Professor of *Materia Medica*) should be expelled from his chair.” The most careless glance at the document in question will prove, that the class, although expressing their sentiments in strong language, did not so far

forget their relative situation, as impertinently to dictate to the Board of Trustees, the line of conduct proper for them to pursue. The simple fact of their reception by that most respectable and intelligent body, would be sufficient to prove, did the absence of other proof render such necessary, that intentions so preposterous and presumptuous were not contained in them. They state in distinct terms, the view which the majority of the class had taken of the subject, and by no possible construction that we can perceive, intimate an action of the class entrenching upon the authority of the Trustees. That such was the opinion of the Board itself, subsequent events clearly show.

On Thursday, Dec. 4th, a meeting was again held, at which a committee was appointed to receive signatures to the resolutions adopted the preceding evening, and transmit the same to the Board of Trustees. Between the appointment of this committee, and the consummation of their duty, nearly a week elapsed. It was during this time that some of those occurrences took place, which 'a Physician' denominates 'the riots,' and upon which so much stress is laid. These, we next in order proceed to examine. On Friday, Dec. 5th, a general desire existed, that the measures then pending should receive, if possible, an universal support. As portions of the class differed only in regard to the *mode* of action, it was hoped that something might be hit upon, calculated to produce harmony and union. Individuals among those of conflicting opinions consulted together, and a happy adjustment was confidently anticipated; but unfortunately, too late in their arrangements, they found, when the lecture of the afternoon concluded, three several persuasions existed, some conceiving that a meeting of the minority, some of the majority, and others of the class had been summoned. In the excitement and confusion caused by a late hour, the want of adaptation in the place, and the total misunderstanding, a disorder arose which the disinterested and kind interference of the lecturer on the 'Institutes' succeeded in a great measure in allaying, but not until after an affair of a strictly personal character, (and which we rejoice in stating has resulted without serious consequences,) unfortunately originated.*

This meeting being so abruptly and inauspiciously terminated, another attempt was made on the ensuing day, Saturday Dec. 6th, to reconcile differences. On this occasion the class assembled in the Anatomical room, and the subject was discussed by those who had signed, as well as those who had not signed the resolutions. But the class adhered to their preceding measures. It was then on motion resolved, "That all who had affixed their signatures, be requested to withdraw," in order that the minority might in perfect quiet, and without molestation, interchange opinions, and adopt such measures as their wishes might suggest, or their interest seem to demand. This meeting however, dissolved without decisive action; some of the number immediately signed the resolutions, others remained neutral, while others were content to listen, with a small remnant of the class, to the lectures which the Professor still continued to deliver.† The Committee feel it their duty as

* See note B. of Appendix.

† It should be borne in mind, that in the signatures attached to this address, the minority as well as the majority, have their representatives. The sentiments expressed are therefore to be held as those of *the class*.

well as a pleasure to state, that during the whole period in which a difference of opinion existed among the members of the class, it was *only* of opinion, and that private partialities were not sacrificed, or interrupted, by the free exercise of thought and expression. This they are impelled to, by observing a disposition, in uninformed spectators, to misconstrue or distort the honest differences of their constituents.

Tuesday, Dec. 9th, was the day on which the resolutions were, in accordance with the rule in such cases made and provided, placed in the hands of the Faculty, with the accompanying note. Two hundred and fifty-nine signatures were appended to the resolutions, the whole number of the class, including graduates and others, being three hundred and ninety-two.

“ Philadelphia, Dec. 9th, 1834.

To the Medical Faculty of the University of Pa.;

Gentlemen, At a meeting of the class attending the lectures in the Medical department of this University, it was resolved that a committee be appointed to receive signatures to the accompanying resolutions, and transmit them to the Board of Trustees; in pursuance whereof, the undersigned were constituted the committee.

The Medical Faculty must already be aware of the circumstances under which the present movement has been commenced and conducted. For years past the class have with great unanimity expressed their dissatisfaction with the course of lectures on the *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy, delivered by Professor Coxe. They have appealed to that gentleman in various ways, but without success. Finding all their efforts unavailing, and foreseeing clearly that if a change in this respect is not effected, the University must ultimately suffer, they have adopted the only method of redress, which seemed to hold out the prospect of a successful issue, and have come to the deliberate conclusion to absent themselves from the lectures of that professor. This measure, apparently harsh, has not been adopted unadvisedly. Several meetings of the class have been convened, and a free interchange of opinion on all points frankly solicited, and as frankly afforded. Differing as a small portion of the class has done from our constituents, as to the “mode” of securing the object in view, it was conceded without a dissenting voice, that Dr. Coxe was “incompetent” to give that degree of information on the important subject of the *Materia Medica* which we have a right to expect, and which it is his province to communicate. The Faculty should not therefore suppose that as our resolutions are not signed by all the members of the class, those who have not done so design continuing their attendance on the lectures of that chair. On the contrary they have fully declared the reverse determination.

The committee feel it incumbent upon them to make these explanations to correct any misapprehensions on the subject into which the Faculty might inadvertently have fallen. The class have endeavored in the accompanying resolutions to express their sentiments mildly, yet firmly, avoiding even the appearance of dictation, which is as remote from our intention, as it would be discreditable to the body which we have the honour to represent on the present occasion. A large

majority having affixed their names to these resolutions, we trust the Faculty will perceive the necessity of immediate and decisive action.

With this brief explanation, the Faculty will have the goodness to transmit these resolutions, with the signatures annexed, to the Board of Trustees at a period as early as possible.

With sentiments of profound respect, we remain, &c.

JOS. BEALE, Jr.

HEBER CHASE,

ALFRED STILLE,

ROBERT MORRIS,

CHARLES F. B. GUILLOU.

Committee, &c.

A meeting of the Faculty was convened on Thursday, 11th, to inquire into the propriety of granting the request of the class, by laying the documents before the Board of Trustees. This point was decided affirmatively, and on the 12th they were presented to the Board, then in special session, on business of a different nature. The next day, Saturday 13th, several Trustees, who had not been present on the preceding evening, summoned a special meeting of the Board for the following Tuesday, at which time the resolutions were received and acted upon. It were equally uninteresting, and unimportant to the matter in consideration, to trace the progress of these papers through the close of December, '34, and the opening of January, '35; until the 6th, of the latter month and year nothing transpired concerning them of sufficient moment to relate; suffice it to say, that they were in the hands of a committee of the Board.

But although this period is uninteresting in regard to the documents just alluded to, it has been pregnant with events, over which 'a Physician' is solicitous to draw a veil, events which he characterizes as "scenes of riot and disturbance, enacted daily at the door of Dr. Coxe's class room." We are unable to imagine on what grounds this statement can be supported. Some minds are so constituted, that they permit fancy to usurp the sceptre of reason, roaming with unbounded license through the brilliant scenes and gorgeous enchantments of imagination, clothing each specious illusion with the garb of truth, and giving

"To airy nothings

A local habitation and a name."

It is not impossible that our author's may be of this character; at all events our conclusions from the best evidence to be obtained, differ so widely from his, that we have only one alternative to propose with the explanation just invented, viz. wilful misrepresentation. On the most creditable testimony, as well from those within the lecture room, as those without, we do unequivocally affirm, that during no equal portion of the present session, or of the last, was there more quiet within and without, than during this very period, when it is declared that 'the riots and disturbances' took place. That the door was occasionally opened by some curious inquirer desirous of ascertaining the number

in attendance, it is not our intention to deny, but we do emphatically deny, that by such acts a tithe of that interruption was caused, once so uniform and annoying, by gentlemen in constant motion to and from the lecture room, some entering for amusement, and others retiring, fatigued with a display of learning, the object of which they were altogether unable to appreciate.

January 6th at length arrived, when it was expected the Board of Trustees would at their stated meeting receive the report of their committee. The nature of that report may be easily surmised from the passage of the following resolution, *that it is expedient that the chair of Materia Medica be vacated.* This it was generally understood was adopted as the most delicate method of evincing the will of the Board, and in that light is an act highly honourable to the body from which it emanated. It afforded an opportunity to withdraw from a situation it was plain the Professor could not very long retain, without subjecting his feelings to unnecessary mortification. It could not have been by him considered as other than a harbinger of harsher measures; but his actions held a different language, and with wonted regularity he appeared, to perform the duties of his office. The class, impressed with the belief just stated, pursued their accustomed occupations, looking forward however, to the following Tuesday, as the time appointed by the Trustees for a final action on the case. During the week which intervened between the 6th and 13th insts., it is proven that Dr. Cox declared more than once, that he would cease to lecture as soon as the Trustees had taken action upon the memorial. Such declarations, backed by the impression that on the said 13th the Board would act finally, inspired all with the hope and belief, that after that date, the source of so much anxiety and unpleasant feeling would become extinct.

And here it becomes the disagreeable duty of the committee to expose in the publication of 'a Physician' a gross and palpable misrepresentation. He holds the following language: "A meeting of the Trustees having been held on the 6th January, and its having been expected that the Professor would most certainly have been dismissed from his office, on that occasion by the Government of the Institution, *such being the determination of the pupils.* When the students on the following morning were informed that the Board could not act on their memorial without a violation of the regulations of the University, except at a meeting specially summoned for the occasion—which meeting had been summoned for the following Tuesday, the Memorialists lost all patience, a meeting was instantly got up, *and it was determined that the students should themselves, the following morning, compel the Professor to discontinue his lectures.*" Assurance is the twin-brother of Ignorance; and were it not for the knowledge of this base alliance, the committee would in vain attempt a solution of the passage just quoted. *With this knowledge, it is easy to conceive, that on a premise so entirely gratuitous, a fiction, purely of the imagination, might be substituted as a fact.* 'A Physician' appears totally unaware that from the 16th December, to 6th January, a committee of the Trustees had examined all the merits of the case, and that it was *on that 16th December, the meeting was held, specially summoned for the occasion,* and that on the 6th

January, the vote was passed as recorded above. It cannot then be wondered at, that after betraying such astonishing ignorance, he should coolly, and dispassionately, describe a meeting as taking place, which meeting was never holden at any time, or in any place, by the medical class of the University. But this is not all. He asserts that it was on the day following the 6th January, that this meeting 'was instantly got up,' at which it was determined 'that the students should the *following morning* compel,' &c., that is to say, that on the 7th the meeting was held, and on the 8th the '*closing scene*' took place. Yet Dr. Coxe lectured peaceably until the 13th instant, and it was not until the 15th that the closing scene was enacted. It is a revolting task to unveil a subject like the present, yet, the committee consider it their imperious duty to bring to light whatever may tend to discredit the statements of the libeller of their constituents.

A meeting of the class was held on Friday, January 9th, in consequence of a strong impression existing in the class, founded on a reported conversation with Dr. Coxe; the nature of that impression, and of the feeling of the class respecting it, are best perceived in a resolution which was adopted without division, to wit:—"Resolved, that the medical class of the University of Pennsylvania, do not wish any portion of the fee for the ticket of *Materia Medica* to be refunded, in the event of that chair being vacated."

January 13th brought with it the special meeting of the Board. According to the laws of the University, no Professor can be removed at the same meeting in which his removal is proposed, nor at any other than a *stated* meeting. The intimation, which the Board of Trustees had given by their vote of the 6th, had met no compliance; the charter of the University prevented the removal of the Professor at the meeting then in session; but one course remained which would evince to all concerned, their final determination, and which was to all intents, except a necessary form, the removal of Dr. Coxe from the chair he occupied; it was *resolved, that it is for the interests of the University, that the present incumbent of the chair of Materia Medica be removed.* On the following morning many reports were in circulation touching the proceedings of the evening before, all however, tending to impress the opinion that no material decision had been effected by the Board of Trustees. These reports produced no other effect upon the more numerous portion of the class than to determine them to remain quiet until after the action of the Board had taken place. Few comparatively were then aware of the necessity which overruled the wishes of that body, but in the course of the day the real state of the case became generally known, and all, except a very insignificant number, were determined peacefully to await the consummation of the law. We now proceed to that event which is mainly relied on to support the assertion that anarchy and confusion prevailed within the Medical Hall. As seven-eighths of the medical class did not attend the lectures of Dr. Coxe, during several weeks prior to the 15th January, as his lecture was the first in the morning, (at 9 o'clock, A. M.) and the Professor of Surgery lectured at 10 o'clock, there were always, between the hours of nine and ten, a greater or less number collected in the passage, and the sitting room adjoin-

ing. On the morning whose history we are about to record, a number larger than usual met in the sitting room to converse upon the subject which filled all minds, and to observe whether the Professor, in contravention of the declarations he had made, and in opposition to the will of the Board of Trustees expressed first mildly, and then more strongly, would still persevere in the delivery of his lectures. To the surprise of many, to the regret of all, he did appear. Some, under the impression it was his intention to deliver a valedictory, augmented the number of the accustomed audience ; others entered from idle curiosity. In the mean time a considerable noise existed in the passage ; loud talking, and laughing, and other rude behaviour, every moment infringed upon the bounds of strict decorum ; and at length when the lecture was about one-half concluded, all who were engaged in this unworthy conduct, to the number of twelve or fifteen, entered the lecture room in a body, but neither with *rushing*, nor the *violence* of passion. With heavy steps they proceeded to the back part of the room. '*Clubs*,' they had none ; '*instruments of other kinds*,' save two small canes, and the hands and feet which nature had given them, they had none. Yet they succeeded with these agents, in drowning the voice of the speaker, and rendered it necessary for him to request them to desist. If we may judge from the daily and reiterated annoyances of a similar kind, though less in degree, through which he had passed on previous occasions with serenity and composure, it was only by the loudness of the sounds produced, and not by the insults which they conveyed, that the professor was compelled to pause in his discourse. It was however, impossible for him to proceed. He therefore begged the gentlemen at first mildly, to maintain silence, but this being refused, he then declared that he was determined to lecture until, to use his own language, the Trustees should turn him out. In the paraphrase which 'a Physician' has given of his address, poetical license is most unwarrantably assumed. Even were there not proof in point, no one, who is accustomed to the manner in which the Ex-Professor delivered his unwritten sentiments, could for a moment conceive the polished address just alluded to had flown from the lips of Dr. Coxe. We think moreover, the late Professor will himself hardly maintain that the statement as to the anticipated action of the Trustees on the "next Tuesday" was then made by him, since he must have known that on the *preceding* Tuesday, they had acted, nor would finally confirm their action till the stated meeting in February. But to return.

The hissings and hootings continued, and the Professor, concluding the lecture, retired to his private room. Nearly the whole of the class now proceeded to the lecture upon surgery, while a small number remained below as usual, to see the Professor leave the building. But contrary to custom he did not make his appearance, and one of his friends entered the room where he delayed. It is stated that this friend "afraid from the excitement of the class, that personal violence might be offered, locked the door." Now we have positive testimony from this very individual, that it was from no fear of 'personal violence' that he locked the door, but to prevent expressions injurious to the feelings of the Professor from coming to his ear. We do not doubt, from sub-

sequent events, that the Professor was in bodily fear, but his exaggerated apprehensions are no test of the actions which produced them. In regard to this subject we again refer to the deposition of the respectable surgeon above quoted. The following are his words: "On January 15th, I arrived at the University just as Dr. Coxe had dismissed the class, there were great cries of 'turn him out!' &c. and considerable disturbance. I was informed by a friend that much interruption had occurred during the lecture; I expressed my disapprobation of such a course as tending to injure the school and themselves. The class went into Dr. Gibson's room, with the exception of about 15 or 20 persons, who remained on the stairs, for the purpose, as I thought, of seeing what effect the disturbance would have on the Professor, upon his leaving the building. I heard no threats of violence, and I solemnly believe that none would have been offered. I have too high a respect for the gentlemen composing the class to suppose they would have so far forgotten themselves as to have assaulted an aged man; had such been the case, many, I know, would have promptly offered their protection; I know I should. I passed to the Anatomical room, but did not remain there long, as the noise on the stairs still continued; it mostly consisted of psalm-singing, and a favorite song called 'Old Grimes.' Had Dr. Coxe retired from his private room at any time after Dr. Gibson had commenced his lecture, he could have passed undisturbed, but he remained there until the class had all assembled for Dr. Chapman's lecture, (at 11 o'clock,) and consequently a great crowd was then collected." This we consider the best possible refutation of the falsehoods contained in the account of 'a Physician.' We have given to the riotous conduct that occurred, all the strength which facts allow; we believe it to have been entirely subversive of that order which should characterise the proceedings of students in a well regulated Institution, discreditable to gentlemen, and altogether inexcusable, in the extent to which it was carried. But while we admit these things, we must deprecate the attempt to fasten on the class the derelictions of a few, or to stigmatise the events of the winter, with terms scarcely applicable to that under notice. It is from the exuberance of good that evil often springs. The sun which enlightens, cheers, and fructifies the earth, creates also the insects which disturb our rest; but shall we therefore curse his bounteous beams? While then, we re-assert our conviction, that the great drama of the session, was in its main action honourable to intellectual beings, earnestly solicitous for the improvement of their faculties, yet we cannot withhold our most decided reprehension from a scene such as has been described. No terms are too strong to express the indignation which every one should feel when he sees the barrier that protects the aged broken down, and trampled under foot, while licentious youth exults in the devastation. Palliations might indeed be offered; and the violation of the pledge given by the Professor, is one of the strongest. What young man would not be irritated at finding the promise of a Professor, voluntarily given, violated without even an apology? That such irritation did arise, and that it hurried a few individuals beyond the line which reason would dictate, is evident. We have no wish to do injustice to any one, and we offer this as a palliation of conduct which we cannot approve.

To proceed:—When at the accustomed hour the Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine arrived, he seemed greatly astonished at

the concourse about the building, and thronging the passage. His appearance was hailed with pleasure ; the crowd separated right and left, and he proceeded to the apartment where Dr. Coxe yet remained. A hasty explanation ensued ; and in a few moments the Professor of Practice re-appeared with Dr. Coxe upon his arm. Under this generous protection, the Professor passed through the opening ranks of the students, who, by their breathless silence, testified respect, even in his humiliated condition. There was not a heart that did not swell with emotion, as the old man faltered by, but it was the emotion of pity, rather than of sympathy ; it was pity for one who had not pity on himself, forbearance towards one who had failed to sustain his dignity as a man of honor. Earnest were the thanks addressed to the Professor who had released him from a state of anxious suspense, though of imaginary peril, and ardent was the grasp which he gave, on parting at the public gate. Will it be believed that Dr. Coxe, after such a scene, could give authority and currency to a paper containing the grossest misrepresentation of this very scene, and that which immediately succeeded ? With the latter we have little to do. It concerns more closely the distinguished individual just alluded to ; yet, as ‘ a Physician ’ accuses him of abetting the actions of the students, and stating what, in our opinion, he never did state, we cannot avoid repelling the imputation of being urged on by him upon this occasion, and affording our testimony to acquit him of the other charge. We have in our possession a copy of the remarks of the Professor of Practice, noted on their delivery, and also one furnished by the Surgeon heretofore cited, which he has written from memory. As these differ only in unimportant particulars, the former is given below.

“ Gentlemen,—I am so much affected by the recent occurrences that I can hardly address you. You have just cause of complaint :—you have a right to make your grievances known to the Trustees, for we live in a free country : but here your duty ends. To say that I approve of the method you have taken at this time to manifest your feelings, would be violating those principles of truth, by which I wish my conduct at all times to be governed. The individual, whom I have just delivered from the greatest distress and affliction, in all his relations of life, both with his family and fellow citizens, has sustained an irreproachable character. Not to possess those talents which are requisite for a lecturer, is his misfortune, not his crime. In the name of this University, which has for nearly a century diffused blessings the most inestimable to every part of our country, and out of respect to the character of the individual, I implore you to desist from any such proceedings in future. I ask it in the name of this school, I ask it as a personal favor.”

On the morning which followed the events just narrated, Friday, 16th Jan. a note was received from the Professor of Materia Medica, and read to the class, stating that he should not resume his lectures until assured of exemption from personal insult. This was the last communication which the Professor had with the students of the University. It was not to be expected that the Faculty should allow the disturbances of the 15th to pass by without notice. The good order of the Institution over which they preside, has ever been too much the object of their watchful attention, to permit neglect upon such an occasion. Several of the Professors, therefore, at the solicitation of all, called on those

students who had officiated as a committee in the transmission of the resolutions to the Board of Trustees, to ask at their hands, as best able to afford it, an explanation of the occurrences of the 15th. To these students was expressed extreme mortification that any thing calculated to injure the fair reputation of the school, should have taken place within its walls ; in return the answer was made in substance above stated: the exposition appeared satisfactory, and the committee was discharged. On Tuesday morning, 20th Jan. a meeting was held, at which the following preamble and resolutions were, on motion, adopted: viz.

“Whereas, we recognise obedience to the laws as the essential basis of all good government, and whereas rumours have gone abroad concerning the events of 15th inst, unfounded in fact, and tending to prejudice this Institution in the opinion of the public ; therefore,

“Resolved, That considering it the duty of this class to correct such opinions if false, and to vindicate themselves from every imputation of dishonorable or disorganizing conduct, we deem it necessary to declare,

“That in our opinion, the resolutions adopted by the Board of Trustees, and also the declarations of the Professor of Materia Medica, himself afforded presumptive evidence, that the lectures of said Professor were to cease after the 13th inst. ; which presumption not being realized, a portion of the class were unable to see without an exhibition of involuntary feeling, that the implied and express wishes of the Board, and the obligation of an explicit pledge were alike disregarded by him :

“And moreover, distinctly to disclaim every intention of personal violence against the Professor of Materia Medica, of controlling the Trustees, or of interfering with their rights as to the appointment or removal of Professors.”

At the same meeting, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted, in consequence of a communication from Dr. Coxe to the committee of the Board informing them that he had ceased to officiate.

“Whereas, This class, alike anxious to maintain its own dignity and the legitimate powers of the Board of Trustees from infringement has abstained from requesting the proper authorities to appoint a Lecturer on Materia Medica and Pharmacy during the continuance of the present incumbent in office ; and whereas, the present incumbent has virtually vacated his chair by ceasing to officiate ; and whereas, the only obstacle which has prevented hitherto this class from expressing its wishes on this point, is now obviated by the voluntary abdication of that Professor, therefore, be it

“Resolved, That for these and other reasons the Board of Trustees respectfully be requested to make those arrangements for our instruction in Materia Medica, which in their estimation may appear most advisable for the interests of this class and the University of Pennsylvania.”

The class owe to the prompt action of the Board, and the spontaneous kindness of the eminent Professor of Theory and Practice, those lectures which from the 26th of January to the termination of the session, so much more than supplied the vacancy occasioned by the absence and subsequent removal of Dr. Coxe. From their commencement disputation was converted into harmonious study, and the elements of agitation seemed to arrange themselves into a cheerful calm.

The stated meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday Feb. 3rd, at which, in consonance with the result of previous deliberations, *it was decided by a vote of sixteen to three, that Dr. Coxe was*

removed ; declaring to the medical profession and the world, that the complaints of the students were founded in justice, and that the best interests of the University called aloud for the decided step they had taken as a last resort.

Nothing took place of sufficient interest to arrest attention, until the 21st Feb. when the publication of 'a Physician,' attracted the notice of the class. We have now arrived at the point whence we sat out, and believe that nothing within the province of the committee has been passed in silence, as regards the facts of the case, and that no fact has in its constituent parts, or its relations, been partially stated, distorted, or magnified. Further comment, at this stage of the discussion, is considered unnecessary, and we now proceed to the consideration of several propositions, having a general bearing upon the expediency and justice of the course adopted by the class. The first we shall notice is, in regard to the competency of the late Professor. To be competent is to have a fitness for a given purpose, to be duly qualified. What are the qualifications for a lecturer on *Materia Medica*, in the 36th year of the nineteenth century ? Is it not a minute acquaintance with that mine of discovery which Europe is tracing with all the eagerness and accuracy of enlightened philosophy ? Is it not to search with avidity the rivers that come in torrents from the four corners of the earth, for the golden sands of knowledge ? Is it not to be where the great revolutions in the scientific world have carried all who boast another than a spurious fame, a celebrity, and not a notoriety ? Is it not to combine ardor, eloquence, activity, with utility and interest ? Or, is it to be learned alone in the lore of Rome and Greece,—to hold familiar converse with Hippocrates, Galen and Celsus, repeat their dogmas, and detail their controversies, to drag from its egg, where it had reposed for centuries unsuspected, the germ of some existing art ; to cling to a chemical nomenclature that our fathers used ; and to render intolerably dull, without a single redeeming ray, a science second to none in interest or usefulness ; in fine, to consume one-fourth to one-third of a course of lectures, in disquisitions on the vitality of the blood, and subjects of a kindred nature. Which of these characters belongs to the competent Professor of *Materia Medica*, and which to the *Ex-Professor*, it needs no skill to determine. Learning, though it be mere antiquarian research, is often pleasing from its quaintness, but we contend, that the only learning fitted for the purpose of instructing others, is that reducible to practical utility. Knowledge then becomes wisdom, from which it but too often differs *toto cælo*.

“ Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men ;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.”

When the late Professor was elected to the chair of chemistry in the University, many years since, there was a general disapproval of the selection by the community, and among the students of that period not a dissimilar sentiment. The late Dr. Rush, that bright sun in the system of American science, was influential in procuring the vote in favor of Dr. Coxe, but regretted, to the last moment of his life, the use of his influence for that purpose. What a comment on the assertions of 'a Physician,' "that the question as to Dr. Coxe's competency, is too ridiculous to be discussed !" that "during the most brilliant epoch in the

history of the school, when his lectures were to be compared with the eloquent discourses of Rush, and the animated and lucid demonstrations of Wistar—he was not then suspected either by the Trustees, Professors, or students, as incompetent !” The colleagues of the Ex-Professor, three years since, including at the time Dr. Physic and Dr. James, the contemporaries of Rush and Wistar, solemnly and unanimously declared in answer to an interrogatory addressed to them by the Trustees, that *they held him incompetent to his office.*

In every class returning to its second course, a large number constantly neglected to attend the lectures of Dr. Coxe, convinced they might with far more advantage employ their time in private study. Every class assembling for the first time, has borne from the remotest sections of the land, the undeviating sentiment of the incompetency of Dr. Coxe. “I attended” says a deponent, “the same lectures in 1823 and ’24. The course of instruction was the same as it was this winter. The Professor at that time was highly unpopular, and a great many of the class seldom attended his lectures.” Had he been competent, how could these things be? Lastly, Dr. Johnson, the celebrated editor of the London Medico-Chirurgical Review, in the number of that work for January, 1835, gives a notice of the inquiry of Dr. Coxe, into the claims of Harvey to the discovery of the circulation of the blood, in which he says: “Should our author ask us if we had perused his arguments, and the documents on which they are founded, we should candidly acknowledge that we did not read one-tenth part of them, and for this reason, that we think a *great deal too much of precious time, and unquestionable erudition* has already been expended on the writing of the book, therefore will we not increase the loss by reading it. If the discovery of the circulation has not, as Dr. Coxe asserts, been of any material use in the practice of physic and surgery, of what use can it be to shift the discovery itself from one man to another?” Again he says, considering the necessity of economizing time, “we cannot help deploring the waste of time and talent, the work before us has cost.” “How, we ask Dr. Coxe, can he afford to throw away so many months and years upon researches that confessedly, can tend to no useful practical purpose whatever?” “We cannot conscientiously advise our junior brethren to study the fathers of physic, till after they have acquired all the knowledge immediate and collateral which the moderns have accumulated.” These passages strongly tend to prove the class correct in the opinion they had formed of the Professor of Materia Medica. But the question recurs, was the class competent to judge? In one sense, no. Not as the artist is competent to judge of a painting, a watchmaker of a chronometer, or a physician of the prognosis of a disease. But as every man of common sense can perceive coarseness in the painting, neatness or awkwardness in the chronometer, and judges with instinctive accuracy of the approach of death, so the student, guided by a similar principle, with at least equal correctness may form a judgment of his teachers.

That man knows but little of human nature, who is ignorant, that the judgments so formed are found with few exceptions to be in accordance with the opinions of the world. But besides, the student has in the present case all the evidence just cited before him, and finding upon comparison with his own observation, however limited, how strictly it tallies, he is forced *à priori* to conclude, the coincidence is perfect. Not only so,

but he daily compares the lectures of one chair with those of another, and readily discovering where the breach exists in that perfect unity which should belong to *one* science, he thither directs his dissatisfaction and complaint. Again, we have testimony, that "during the winters of 1826-27-28 and 29, the Professor of Materia Medica, was compelled to ask from the attending students, that they would not interrupt him, that he was addressing *medical philosophers, &c.*"; this we think may be fairly construed, as an admission by Dr. Coxe, that his pupils were competent judges, for assuredly if they were not so, his lectures could not have been intended to instruct them. But of this enough.

The committee have now concluded their whole statement in regard to the facts of the case, as well as of the causes which led to them, and consider that the following inferences may with propriety be drawn :

1st. That the class acted independently of all external influence whatever.

2nd. That the Faculty endeavored to prevent their action, and failing in that, gave it no countenance or encouragement.

3rd. That the statements of 'a Physician,' are, with scarcely a single exception, unfounded in truth.

4th. That there was every reason to believe Dr. Coxe incompetent, and the class capable of estimating his competency.

The committee cannot however take leave of this subject, without a general surmise as to the motive of the article signed 'a Physician.' It has pleased the Almighty to deny the humble creatures of his beneficence, the capacity of prying into the hearts of their fellow-mortals, in order to display their faults, their follies, or their crimes to the sneering gaze of a pitiless world. But whilst thus listening to the pleadings of mercy, he has not forgotten the claims of Justice. At the same time that he has exposed the recesses of the human heart to no eye but his own, he has gifted man with faculties sufficiently enlarged and powerful, to serve as a defence against the attacks of malice and envy. With a species of retributive justice he has ordained that the clue should not unfrequently be furnished by the offender himself. The motives of the author in this instance, can only be gathered from the contents of his publication, and if the light in which we view them be the correct one, they are such as should most carefully shun investigation. Upon examination of the article alluded to, it will be found that a portion of it presents the following suggestions: "We have heard it plead as an excuse for Dr. Coxe's colleagues, that the reputation of the University, is rapidly sinking in the estimation of the public. That the Jefferson Medical college, a young, and till lately a despised rival, has so increased her students (we believe in two years from sixty to two hundred and forty) and so extended her reputation by the zeal and energy of her professors, that she begins now to be had in higher repute than her elder sister, and that something must be done to save the University from ruin." The assertion contained in this passage concerning the number of students, is, we regret to say, unsupported by any published documents of the Jefferson Medical College. The community, well aware of the practice in all respectable institutions of publishing an annual catalogue of the names and residences of its pupils, would be much better satisfied with such a voucher in the present instance, than with the bare declaration of an irresponsible paper. Until such appear, we are compelled to withhold our assent from the above and similar affir-

mations. We say nothing of the ridiculous nature of the attack ; the talents of the Professors, and the reputation of the respective schools, are sufficiently known to the public, not to require further comment on our part. But we are inclined to think, that if carefully weighed, it will explain the anxiety displayed by ' a Physician,' to forestall Dr. Coxe in his vindication on other grounds than those stated by himself. It will be recollected, that at a certain stage of his argument, he engages in numerical details, relative to the signers of the resolutions presented to the Board of Trustees, and which were passed at a meeting of the students, held on the 3rd December, 1834. Now these details could not have been procured from any other person than the Ex-Professor, without placing his secret at the disposal of gentlemen not likely to respect it, after the rough treatment received at his hands. He must therefore have been aware, that Dr. Coxe, at the time of the publication of the article, was engaged in preparing a statement of the events terminating in his expulsion from the chair of *Materia Medica* ; and we would particularly suggest, that the article is not so much a defence of Dr. Coxe, as an attack upon the highly honoured and respected physicians who compose the Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. Where was the necessity then, we would ask, of intruding upon the public, a communication on this subject, when the author must have been in possession of the knowledge, that the venerable and learned Ex-Professor, was himself collecting documents preparatory to publishing a vindictory account of the transactions which preceded and attended his expulsion ? We are inclined to think it requires but a moment's reflection to answer this interrogatory.

Upon the publication of the resolutions of the class concerning the article in the *Pennsylvanian*, a second article appeared, which the committee would not condescend to notice, did it not attempt to prejudge the question now submitted to the public for decision. The main object of this piece is to rebut the assertion of the resolutions, that ' a Physician' refused to give up his name, &c. To this end he publishes the correspondence contained in a previous part of this paper. A simple reference to those documents will render it clear that there is little difference between denying such information absolutely, and postponing its communication until the *onus* has been shifted to other shoulders, more capable of bearing it, and the original culprit left to the insignificance from which he sprang. As the writer has stated his errors to be of trivial importance, we will specify one in addition to those already disposed of, which, if of no intrinsic importance throws some light upon the general character of the article. We respectfully request the author of the anonymous communication published in the *Pennsylvanian* of the 21st ult. to inform the committee of the Medical class of the University of Pennsylvania, an Institution whose fame is established on the firmest basis throughout the Old and New Worlds, by what trick of magic he has contrived to obtain such an insight into the regions of futurity as to be able to relate events occurring on the 15th January, 1835, in a communication dated on the 12th of the same month and year ? We have only to add that our constituents having deemed it not injudicious "that a refutation of his account of their transactions should be prepared, we think it unnecessary on our part otherwise to notice his remark upon that subject, than by hinting that it would be

most conducive to his comfort and convenience to retain his advice hereafter until solicited.

Having attached our names to this address, we consider ourselves as having vouched for, and being answerable for the truth, of all contained in it. Every attention that the unremitted industry of the undersigned could give, has been paid to the collection and examination of evidence which they are ready to produce when called upon by a responsible person so to do;—but they do not feel themselves bound, under these circumstances, to give a moment's consideration to the attacks which may flow from the pen of every anonymous, mercenary, or irresponsible scribbler.

The committee having thus completed the duty intrusted to them to the best of their ability, cheerfully abide the decision of the public, seeing no reason to doubt that it will be such as they earnestly desire. The noxious qualities, which the articles just reviewed have been supposed to possess, will, we hope, on a closer examination, be found, by them, to owe their reputation, like the famed Upas tree of the Eastern isles, not so much to their fatality, as to the exaggerations of fiction.

Signed,

ALFRED STILLE.
CHAS. F. B. GUILLOU.
JOHN A. WEIDMAN.
HEBER CHASE.
CHAS. D. MAXWELL.
Committee.

March 11th, 1835.



APPENDIX.

Note A.

"I certify that I met Dr. Gibson at Dr. Chapman's, on Saturday evening the 8th November, 1834, and told him that an attempt would be made on the following Monday, by certain members of the class to interrupt Dr. Coxe's lectures in the University, that Dr. Gibson earnestly begged me to go to those members and request them as a *personal favour* to him not to make the attempt; that he thought it would injure the University and the students, and ought not to be done. I also certify that Professor Horner made the same request of me, and that in consequence of this interference on my part the measures contemplated were abandoned, and were afterwards renewed by other members of the class, who were (as I am credibly informed,) not even acquainted with the students originally concerned."

March 16th 1835.

Signed,

WILLIAM HARRIS, M. D.

Note B.

No. 1.—"I certify that during the last winter, Dr. Wm. Gibson, Professor of Surgery in the University of Pennsylvania, was the *first* to call upon me and request that police officers might be sent out immediately to arrest two medical students, (Messrs. B. & W.) and prevent them from engaging in a duel, which he had reason to believe they contemplated fighting."

March 16th, 1835.

Signed,

JNO. SWIFT, Mayor.

No. 2.—"I certify that I met with Dr. Gibson at Chester, and that he told me his object was to follow Messrs. W. & B. into Delaware, and if possible prevent them from fighting, and that if he could not prevent the duel he should remain somewhere in the neighbourhood, in order to afford his assistance in case either should be wounded. I also certify that Professor Gibson was not within two miles of the party when they fought."

March 16th, 1835.

Signed,

THOS. D. MUTTER, M. D.

